

## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **NEW TASK FORCE TAKES ON CRIME**

**Wheeling, WV** – Area law enforcement agencies have a message for drug dealers, streetwalkers, and other vagrants – we’re coming for you.

On January 5, 2010, the Wheeling Police Department and Ohio County Sheriff’s Department will deploy a team known as the Community Action Team (CAT). CAT will target street crimes such as drugs, illegal weapons, gang activity, and domestic violence. The team will focus on illegal activity in neighborhoods directed by patrol, investigations, information sharing with patrol units, probation and parole officers, and detectives.

The Community Action Team’s mission is to reclaim the neighborhoods which have found themselves in a state of decay, with rising incidents of violence, drug and firearm crime, domestic violence incidents and associated nuisance crimes. Officers have been responding to an increasing amount of domestic violence and “shots fired” incidents in our community. The combination of increased police presence, offender prosecution, and community participation will provide deterrence to this type of activity. Once this process proves to improve the neighborhood, the same philosophy will be taken into other area neighborhoods.

Ohio County Sheriff Pat Butler said, “The cooperative effort between the departments is a benefit to all citizens. We are looking forward to getting started.”

CAT is a coordinated effort with the Wheeling Police Department, Ohio County Sheriff’s Department, West Virginia State Police, Ohio Valley Drug and Violent Crime Task Force, Ohio County Prosecutor’s Office, and all local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies. The Wheeling office of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms will work closely with CAT; all firearms-related seizures and arrests will be reported to the ATF for further investigation and prosecution.

The team will consist of seven (7) officers. Their salaries will be paid by each participating agency.

“The deployment of this team will begin to address the concerns of the residents and businesses in particular areas of the City. Based on discussions at recent neighborhood crime watch meetings, we are responding to the needs of the citizens,” stated Chief Matheny.

For information on this project, please contact the Wheeling Police Department at (304) 234-3664.

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